

**OPENING STATEMENT  
OF  
CHAIRMAN TOM DAVIS  
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM  
HEARING  
“Policing Capital Sites: Improving Coordination, Training and Equipment”**

**July 21, 2006**

The primary obligation of any government is the safety and security of its citizens, and we have been acting on many fronts to fulfill that obligation. Our region faces unique challenges when it comes to planning and implementing security measures. A multitude of local, state, and federal agencies need to work in unison. Today it's our hope to examine the extent to which that coordination is working and where it needs to improve.

As the federal seat of government, Washington, D.C. is unique in that it houses the executive, legislative and judicial branches and many independent agencies. Washington is home to many national landmarks and key operational facilities like the Washington Monument, the Capitol and the Navy Yard. Not only do we have the federal workforce at these sites, many thousands of visitors come here to visit these landmarks. In addition, Washington is a city that has people living in it. It has neighborhoods and it needs law enforcement protection just like any other major city.

In 1997, Congress adopted the National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act, which in part authorized the District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Department and 32 federal law enforcement agencies to enter into cooperative agreements to assist in carrying out crime prevention and law enforcement activities in the District of Columbia. Those agreements could cover such activities as federal law enforcement agency patrolling areas in the District, sharing and donating equipment and supplies, operating on shared radio frequencies, and federal agency processing and papering of suspects they arrest in the District. As a result, today we have a situation where many secure federal sites are operated and protected by federal police units.

The Government Accountability Office recently reported that agencies found it difficult to measure initiatives to improve security and that resources were scarce. GAO stated “Given their competing priorities and limited security resources, U.S. federal agencies could benefit from specific performance measurement guidance and standards for facility protection to help them address the challenges they face and help ensure that their physical security efforts are achieving the desired results.”

While sites such as the Capitol and the White House are well guarded, there are many other high level and sensitive targets that, if attacked, could result in loss of life and serious damage to property and national prestige. September 11, 2001 confirmed the

Nation's Capital as a terrorist target. Those who wish us harm have demonstrated their perverted preference for high-profile targets of both operational and symbolic value. As we harden some, they shop for others. We need to remain vigilant and continue to improve facility security here.

Despite clear progress, it appears more needs to be done. According to a January 6, 2006 *Washington Post* article, the Navy police lacked basic training, equipment, and critical resources in protecting the public and secure sites. Officers were reported complaining about incidents of carrying unworkable police radios and armor piercing ammunition used in service weapons but inappropriate, even dangerous, in a civilian security mission. We are told the Navy has been working to address these issues and we look forward to hearing testimony on the status of those efforts.

The Committee is dedicated to fostering greater efficiency and coordination among the federal police units and District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Department. The federal law enforcement agencies share responsibility with the Metro force for protecting the federal facilities in the Nation's Capital. The critical nature of this joint mission and the shared responsibility among a myriad of agencies demand an unprecedented degree of cooperation and coordination between traditionally independent public safety agencies that many not yet be trained or resourced for that critical joint mission.

This coordination becomes all the more important now that the Metropolitan Police Chief has declared a "crime emergency" in the District as a result of the sudden increase of serious crimes after a steady reduction in crime rates. Protection from street crimes and terrorism demands a coordinated and comprehensive response.

This morning, we have representatives from four federal law enforcement agencies that share in providing law enforcement services in the District: the Navy Police Division-Naval District Washington, the Army Military District of Washington, the Federal Protective Service, and the United States Park Police. We expect witnesses to provide information that will enable us to assess the current readiness, including the adequacy of equipment and training, of each of those units and the level of coordination in their core law enforcement missions. We expect each witness to provide information concerning the agency's security force, including training and technologies used to secure and protect federal facilities, coordination of security efforts within and among agencies to improve or enhance site security, and impediments that make it difficult to maintain and increase security at federal facilities.